

Grant Funds Available



**Financial assistance can aid community tree projects.
Deadline is June 30, 2009.**

Municipalities and homeowner groups are invited to apply for a 2009 Urban and Community Forestry Grant from the Delaware Forest Service. Grants can reimburse up to 50 percent of the cost of a community tree project, up to a limit of \$5000. Communities can apply in each of two grant categories: tree planting or tree management. Eligible projects must be performed on public lands—those areas owned by a state, county, local government, or community civic association. Public lands can also include parks, greenways, recreation areas, and/or public rights-of-way or easements. Applications must be postmarked by the grant deadline of June 30.

Since 1991, the Urban & Community Forestry Program has awarded over \$1.5 million to over 200 Delaware communities and organizations. Examples of a qualifying community tree project can include a tree inventory, development of professional community forestry plans, hazardous tree pruning and removal, a riparian area or stream buffer planting, or a street tree planting project. Official applications and detailed guidelines can be downloaded on the web at <http://dda.delaware.gov/forestry>. Click on "Urban and Community Forestry Program"

"We're hoping to receive applications from new participants throughout Delaware," said Henry Poole, Urban Forestry Coordinator. "Any community or homeowner association with public open space can benefit from our annual grant program. Whether it's the removal of hazardous trees, planting trees in open space, or the development of a community forestry plan, we may be able to assist with additional funding."



State Forester Austin Short acknowledges Rick Mickowski for his dedicated service of more than 15 years as a member of the Delaware Community Forestry Council

Arbor Day Highlights

Under warm, sunny skies at Blackbird State Forest near Smyrna, Delaware Governor Jack Markell presided over the state's annual Arbor Day ceremony - highlighted by special awards honoring the past, present and future of forestry service, preservation, and education.

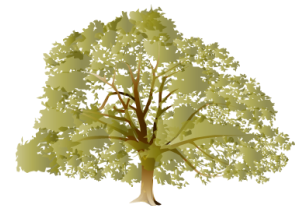
New Castle County Conservation District's Rick Mickowski, who recently ended 15 years on the Community Forestry Council, was honored for his outstanding record of service to the state. Actively involved for many years with the Delaware Envirothon, he plans to devote his energy to the Delaware Association of Environmental Educators and their efforts to advance natural resources education.

Governor Markell accepted a \$2 million grant from the U.S. Forest Service for forestland preservation in Sussex County. The money will help fund Delaware's "Green Horizons Project," a multi-phase effort to purchase forestland in high-priority natural resource areas near Redden State Forest.

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WHAT TREE IS IT?

CLUES:

- Known by its deeply incised and lobed leaves in summer
- While 200-year-old trees are common, some have reached 800 years in age
- "Few trees in old age are more picturesque and truly handsome"
- One of Delaware's most important hardwood species
- Natural regeneration is the preferred method of supplying future needs of this desirable wood
- Hard to transplant, and known as a slow grower, it is not often used as a street tree or highway planting

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>> Town Administrator Charles McMullen (left) of Ocean View in Sussex County receives an award from the Delaware Forest Service's Kyle Hoyd (right) in honor of the town's recognition as a Delaware Tree City USA.



<< Larry Mastic of the U.S. Forest Service (left) presents a \$2 million "check" for forestland preservation to State Forester Austin Short and Delaware Governor Jack Markell (right).



Delaware Forest Service Education Coordinator Ashley Ward accepts the prestigious Bronze Smokey Award from the U.S. Forest Service's Larry Mastic. Ward was honored for her work with the Smokey Bear program.

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The goal is to assemble tracts of contiguous forestland to better protect wildlife as well as the ecologically sensitive watersheds in Sussex County, an area which has experienced accelerating development. The land will be added to Redden State Forest—Delaware's largest—covering over 11,000 acres.

Delaware's application was one of only 24 nationwide to receive funding for the competitive grants awarded by the U.S. Forest Service's Forest Legacy Program. Since 2004, Delaware has received almost \$9 million in funding. Combined with state and private funding, Delaware has been able to preserve over 2,000 acres of forestland in Sussex County in the past 5 years. Officials hope to announce a land purchase sometime next year in the "Redden/Ellendale Forest Legacy Area," just north of Georgetown.

Delaware Forest Service Educator Ashley Ward received a prestigious

Bronze Smokey Award from the Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention Committee, a national honor presented to a select few recipients in any given year. Ward was honored for her work in directing Delaware's annual Smokey Bear Fire Safety Education Program. For the past five years, she has succeeded in expanding the range and scope of the program to almost 75% of all first-grade children in Delaware's private and public schools. The award is sponsored by the Ad Council, the U.S. Forest Service and the National Association of State Foresters.

Governor Markell also honored the children who won Delaware's 16th Annual Arbor Day School Poster Contest. The National Representative, 5th-Grader Sophia Kottenhahn Leslie of Claymont Elementary in Wilmington, placed 3rd overall in the United States for her watercolor poster on the theme, "Trees Are Terrific...In Cities and Towns." Grace Winston of Winston Learning Academy in Milford was recognized as the winner in Delaware's contest for grades K-4.

Governor Markell also honored Delaware's Tree City USA communities, an award for cities and towns who meet criteria established by the National Arbor Day Foundation. This year's Delaware's Tree City USA cities are: Bethany Beach, Bridgeville, Dagsboro, Delaware City, Dewey Beach, Dover, Dover Air Base, Fenwick Island, Lewes, Middletown, Milford, Newark, Ocean View, Odessa, Rehoboth Beach, Smyrna, and Wilmington.

Highlights from Arbor Day 2009

Delaware Student Captures 3rd Place in National Contest

Delaware Governor Jack Markell honors 5th-grader Sophia Kottenhahn Leslie of Claymont Elementary in Wilmington, Delaware's National Representative to the 2009 Arbor Day School Poster Contest.

Her award-winning watercolor poster on this year's theme, "Trees Are Terrific... In Cities and Towns," captured 3rd place nationwide—the highest finish ever achieved by a Delaware student in the 16 years of participation in the contest.



Grace Winston of Milford was honored as the winner of Delaware's statewide Arbor Day Poster Contest for grades K to 4 by Governor Jack Markell.

Shade Trees Can Reduce Power Bills by 11.4 Percent

A new study shows just how valuable shade trees are in reducing homeowners' electricity bills during hot summer months. Professor David Laband in the Auburn University School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences says electricity usage and costs will be 11.4 percent less if a house has just 17.5 percent heavy shade coverage, compared to one with no shade.

"The keys are heavy foliage and late afternoon shade," Laband said. "Savings can be very significant. Over the years I had read statements that shade trees reduce electricity consumption, so we wanted to put a dollar amount to it."

The yearlong study looked at the annual energy savings from shade trees, primarily from May to September. He analyzed power bills, calculated shade coverage and surveyed owners about household makeup, electricity-usage habits, square footage, type of air conditioning, appliances, roofing, exterior material and other factors.

"We looked at the amount of shade in the early morning, early afternoon and late afternoon," Laband said. "If you have trees on the west side of your house, you will have a much lower power bill."

Using power company rates for kilowatt hours per day, Laband said the 11.4 percent savings would equal \$31 to \$33 per month. The study categorized types of shade into light, moderate and heavy, and found a house covered with 50 percent of light shade can save 10.3 percent.

Thermostat settings were important. "For each degree you raise the thermostat, you will save 3.3 percent," he said. "We also found that children under 12 are the major power consumers. They watch TV, play games and leave lights on."

Laband hopes the study will encourage real estate developers not to cut down all the trees on new lots. "Many older houses have large trees because the owners did not rely as much on air conditioning."



Tree tips

Mulch is one of your tree's best friends. It protects roots, provides nutrients and can prevent mower and weed trimmer damage. A 1- to 4-inch layer of mulch works best.



Remember to water newly planted trees - especially in times of drought.

Tree Pollen Season: Nothing To Sneeze At

What is pollen?

Trees, like other plants, produce microscopic round or oval pollen grains to reproduce. In some species, a plant uses the pollen from its own flowers to fertilize itself. Other types must be cross-pollinated; that is, in order for fertilization to take place and seeds to form, pollen must be transferred from the flower of one plant to that of another plant of the same species. Insects do this job for certain flowering plants, while other plants rely on wind transport.



When buying trees, avoid ones known to cause allergies, such as elm, pecan, or walnut.

While the job of pollen is to fertilize other plants, it quite often doesn't reach its target. Many times, pollen winds up entering our noses and throats, making our lives difficult if not simply miserable. To make things worse, pollen is virtually inescapable; even if we seal off our houses, pollen will still find its way in. Interestingly, plants with bright colored flowers usually don't bother pollen allergy sufferers. It is the plain looking trees and plants that cause major symptoms.

What Is Tree Pollen Allergy?

Trees are the earliest pollen producers, releasing their pollen as early as January in the southern states and as late as May or June in the northern states. Trees can aggravate your allergy symptoms, even if they are not on your property, since trees release large amounts of pollen that can be distributed miles away from the original source.

Tree Pollen Allergy Season - April through May

Top Pollen Producing Trees in the Northeastern U.S.

- | | |
|--------------|------------|
| • ASH | • HICKORY |
| • BEECH | • MAPLE |
| • BIRCH | • OAK |
| • COTTONWOOD | • SYCAMORE |
| • ELM | • WALNUT |

What Trees Cause Pollen Allergy?

Trees likely to produce pollen allergy are: oak, ash, elm, hickory, pecan, box elder, and mountain cedar. Of the 50,000 different kinds of trees, less than 100 have been shown to cause allergies. Most allergies are specific to one type of tree or to the male cultivar of certain trees, such as: catalpa, elm, hickory, olive, pecan, sycamore, and walnut. +The female version of these species are totally pollen-free:

- Ash
- Box elder
- Cottonwood
- Date palm
- Maple (red)
- Maple (silver)
- Poplar
- Willow



Some people, however, do show cross-reactivity among trees in the alder, beech, birch, and oak family, as well as the juniper and cedar families.

Strategies for Tree Pollen Allergy

There are several possible strategies for dealing with tree pollen allergy. If you buy trees for your yard, look for species that do not aggravate allergies:

- Crape myrtle
- Dogwood
- Fig
- Fir
- Pear
- Plum

- Redbud
- Redwood
- Female cultivars of ash, box elder, cottonwood, maple, poplar, or willow trees.
- Avoid the outdoors between 5:00 and 10:00 A.M. Wait until late afternoon or after a heavy rain, when pollen levels are lower.
- Keep windows in your home and car closed to lower exposure to pollen. To keep cool, use air conditioners and avoid using window and attic fans.
- Remember that pollen can travel indoors on people and pets.
- Dry your clothes in a dryer rather than hanging them outside. Otherwise, pollen can collect on clothing and be carried indoors.

Answer to "What Tree Is It?"

Quercus alba, otherwise known as white oak, is a common native tree that usually reaches a height up to 70 or 80 feet with a diameter of 2 to 3 feet. Occasionally it grows up to 120 feet with a diameter up to 7 feet. Oak trees can live for hundreds of years.



White oak is a very important commercial hardwood tree in Delaware. Its durable and hard wood can be used for piling, shipbuilding, construction, interior finish, flooring, furniture, baskets, and fuel, among many worthwhile uses. The acorns are an important food for forest mammals and birds.

Gypsy moth can defoliate and weaken oak trees considerably. Fortunately, Delaware has not had a widespread outbreak in years.